

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you today as a current satellite TV subscriber who would like to add my voice of support to the pending merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV .. The combination of these two satellite providers will provide numerous benefits to consumers like me, including more choices in channels, programming, broadband and new television technologies.

By merging, the combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable television and can offer more programming choices and, most importantly, all local TV channels in every market in the U.S. By providing local TV channels everywhere, this merger will make satellite television a strong alternative to cable in our community. Throughout the country, people will now be able to turn to satellite TV to access their local news, weather and community information, in addition to a comprehensive package of national video programming. But just as exciting, the merger will bring the availability of affordable high-speed Internet service by satellite to over 40 million Americans who don't have high-speed Internet access. These tremendous benefits to consumers won't happen without the merger. Satellite-delivered Internet service will bring an affordable and competitive alternative to cable modems and DSL to consumers in big cities, small towns and rural areas alike. This will give me a competitive choice for Internet access and will be especially advantageous to rural communities where cable modems and DSL are not likely to be available anytime in the near future.

In the interest of improving our access to competitive television and Internet service, I urge you to lend your support to this merger. In our particular neighborhood we can not install antennas and can not receive local news, weather, and other important and critical information. By the time we get the information it is already history and quite possibly too late for our families to react to critical events and endangers our lives. We have contacted our local cable provider and we also provided the cable company a petition as they requested to show them the interest and need for this service in our neighborhood. We also went before the local city council to make them aware of the need for local broadcasts for timely and critical emergency information. The local cable company almost laughed at us and told us we should sign up for satellite service. They even told some citizens from our area that we might never get cable in our neighborhoods, some times bordering on being rude in the process. We attended several city council meetings, only to be told they could only try to persuade the cable company to provide service to our neighborhoods. We stated to the council that the cable service was a franchise and was obligated to provide service to all taxpayers of the city. This has been going on for 3 plus years and we have missed important local news and weather related information. How long does this have to go on before some or all of us suffer serious consequences from lack of the essential services as taxpayers/citizens we have earned. Please approve this merger ASAP for the good of all small town hard working dedicated American citizens.

Thank You Very Much
Leslie and Charlie Rowland

Sincerely,

Charles & Leslie Rowland
207 Carrington Way
Kingsland, GA 31548